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PROJECT IMPACT TODAY

A quarterly newsletter
published by FEMA Region
10 to share information,
leverage resources, and
capitalize on proven
successes for building
Project Impact disaster-
resistant communities.

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PROJECT IMPACT TODAY

BUILDING DISASTER RESISTANT COMMUNITIES ONE STEP AT A TIME

King and Pierce Partners Sign On



L to R: FEMA Director James Lee Witt, Pierce County Executive Doug Sutherland and Congressman Norm Dicks stress mitigation and partnership at "full court" press conference.

Last month FEMA Director James Lee Witt joined Congressman Norm Dicks, King County Executive Ron Sims, Pierce County Executive Doug Sutherland, and a host of government, business, community and non-profit agency leaders to formally sign the King and Pierce County *Project Impact* partnership resolution at the Centre at Norpoint, in Tacoma. Initial partnership priorities include enhancing the survivability of the regional transportation system, and protecting and restoring communications and other vital systems in the wake of a major earthquake or other natural disaster.

The clarion call was consistent: "Earthquakes don't stop at city lines, county lines, district lines, or even state lines. Partnerships must encompass those lines to effectively protect their constituencies."

Introduced by 6th District Congressman Norm Dicks, James Lee Witt put it this way: "Project Impact is not about FEMA. It's about us working with you, the communities, businesses and government officials to reduce the terrible toll that disasters are taking in this Country."

King and Pierce County *Project Impact* partners include: FEMA, Pierce Transit, Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, Sound Transit, University of Washington, USGS, Washington State departments of Natural Resources and Transportation, Boeing, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and EQE International.

The combined trade of the Tacoma and Seattle ports—\$100 billion annually—surpasses the total trade volume across the North Atlantic to Europe.

"Project Impact is not about FEMA. It's about us working with you, the communities, businesses and government officials to reduce the terrible toll that disasters are taking in this Country."

—James Lee Witt

2nd Annual On-Line Auction American Red Cross

Last year's Seattle/King County American Red Cross On-Line Auction proved so successful that this year they're taking it nation-wide—maybe even international! According to Chapter CEO Jon Fine, Seattle King County ARC is leading the way within the Red Cross and within the non-profit community overall: "The internet is the key to the future, both in the delivery of services and in broadening community support."

This year's auction will run March 24-2 April. To learn more about the cyberspace fundraiser auction call Gill Burton, (206) 726-3542.

Reducing Disaster Losses—Community Outreach Compact Disk

Our new Compact Disk provides a comprehensive source of information on hazard mitigation and the Project Impact process along with overviews of FEMA's major programs. The disk contains 2 videos, over 70 direct web links, and over 220 publications and documents, divided into 3 sections:

- Project Impact Process

(continued on page 6)

From Regional Director David L. de Courcy Project Impact 2000—The Wave of the Future for Emergency Management



Last month's extremely successful King-Pierce County Project Impact signing ceremony didn't close a

chapter on our 1999 communities. Building on innovations pioneered by our 1997 Seattle pilot community and benefiting from the progressive successes of communities as diverse as Benton County in Oregon, and the City of Boise in Idaho, our newest partners enter 2000 with even brighter futures.

Congressman Norm Dicks summed it up in a nutshell when, in

addressing Western Washington print and broadcast media at the January 2000 Signing Ceremony, he described *Project Impact* as embodying the future of emergency management in America. "In appointing James Lee Witt FEMA Director in 1993 this Administration redefined how America deals with disasters," said the Congressman. "By acting before disaster strikes, we are building sustainable futures for our children, and their children."

It's true. As we continue to develop our existing community partnerships, formalize the commitments of Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska; Blaine County, Idaho; Bend and Deschutes County, Oregon; and Kitsap County in Washington State—and as we move ahead selecting new 2001 communities, we strive to bequeath a legacy of security to those who follow.

David L. de Courcy
Director, FEMA Region 10

National Outstanding Citizen Award:

Roger Faris, Phinney Neighborhood Association

From helping to develop home retrofit standards, to hanging flyers in stores to promote training classes, Roger Faris has been contributing on many levels to the Seattle Project Impact Home Retrofit Program for the past two years. In recognition, Roger Faris of the Phinney Neighborhood Association received the National Outstanding Citizen Award at the December 1999 FEMA Project Impact Summit in Washington D.C.

Pre-dating the Project Impact initiative, Roger Faris has been a community resource on home improvements for over 16 years as the coordinator of the Well Home Program at the Phinney Neighborhood Association. When Seattle was designated as a pilot Project Impact community, Roger Faris was approached to provide the training course for homeowners based on his existing earthquake retrofit course. The result of his participation was substantially more than originally imagined.

In the past two years, Faris has taught over 1000 homeowners how to assess and retrofit their homes against earthquakes as part of the Home Retrofit class, and has led the Home Retrofit Professional Training at the University of Washington for over 160 contractors/building officials. Additionally, he has provided extensive volunteer hours in outreach to promote both classes and the expansion of the Home Retrofit program to neighboring communities.

In his remarks accepting the award, Faris thanked FEMA Director James Lee Witt and



Photo Caption: David de Courcy (r) shares an informal moment with National Outstanding Citizen Award Winner Roger Faris at the 1999 Summit in Washington D.C.

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knowl-
edged
other
members
of
Seattle's
team for
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Project
Impact.

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Oregon's Land Use Program Helps Communities Plan for Disaster Resistance

Land use planning is a powerful tool for mitigating the effects of natural hazards by strengthening standards that avoid the hazard or significantly lessen its impact. Since 1973, Oregon has maintained a strong statewide land use program. Nineteen statewide planning goals form the program's foundation. Oregon's statewide planning Goal 7 relates to planning for natural hazards.

Goal 7 requires local governments to identify areas of natural hazards and to adopt policies to protect life and property from those hazards through comprehensive land use plans. Goal 7 specifically requires local governments to not locate development in areas of known natural hazards without "appropriate safeguards." "Appropriate safeguards" include mitigation activities like elevating structures to avoid flooding.

After the flood and landslide events of 1996 and 1997, Oregon's Governor Kitzhaber directed the Department of Land

Conservation and Development (DLCD) to evaluate Goal 7's effectiveness in minimizing natural hazards. Oregon's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Review Board selected and FEMA (with DLCD match) funded the Goal 7 project. The evaluation included a University of Oregon survey of local governments. The survey found that while Goal 7 generally provides enough direction, implementation hurdles remain. Further analysis suggests that Goal 7, as currently written, is not sufficient to meet the hazard mitigation needs of Oregonians in the 21st century.

DLCD is responding through a two pronged approach. First, DLCD and other state hazard mitigation agencies are providing enhanced technical assistance to communities. Natural Hazards Technical Resource Guides are being developed for local planners and decision-makers to provide hazards information and sample policies including model ordinances. There will be guides for Oregon's major hazards including floods,



This home along the Siletz River was substantially flood damaged in 1998 and was elevated to conform with current floodplain regulations in October 1999. Floodwaters five feet high inundated the area on November 25, but there was no damage whatsoever to the structure.

wildfires, earthquakes, landslides and coastal hazards. Guides will also be provided to help communities evaluate how well their existing land use programs address hazards and to help anticipate legal issues associated with planning for natural hazards. A complete list of guides and additional information is available at <http://www.dlcd.state.or.us/>.

Boise River Advance Hydraulic Modeling

The City of Boise, will benefit from a Project Impact partnership between the University of Idaho, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services. The three agencies signed a memorandum to jointly provide for a research assistantship. The doctoral candidate with the U of I's Ecohydraulics Research Group will develop three-dimensional dynamic models for the Boise River and apply them to GIS in order to provide planners and elected officials with a graphic understanding of the effectiveness of floodplain management in existing and proposed developments.

The 3-D model will use USGS data recently acquired for a FEMA-funded restudy of the Boise River floodplain. The importance of floodplains and riparian wetlands in maintaining the integrity of riverine ecosystems has been recognized for the past twenty years. These are the same twenty years that have seen enormous growth along the Boise River and great pressures especially for residential development. Forensic studies have indicated that there are some areas of the floodplain where development had little effect on local or downstream flooding; other developments may have significant adverse impacts that should require careful management. The Boise River 2000

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Youths help get "Seniors Ready" for disaster

Senior Citizens in the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Alaska got a helping hand this month from a group of young people as a result of Project Impact efforts focused on reducing future disaster risk.

Ten cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy at Fort Richardson in Anchorage visited senior citizens on the KPB as part of Project Impact's "Senior Ready" Program. This program was designed to help seniors prepare and mitigate against losses from future natural disasters by doing basic household mitigation such as installing tie down straps to hot water heaters. The cadets also installed smoke detectors, checked to see if house numbers were visible and made sure homeowners understood the benefits of a defensible perimeter in their high risk fire hazard areas.

Project Impact coordinator Kathy Scott said the Seniors Ready program is valuable for both the cadets and seniors.

"The seniors received some needed assistance not readily available to them, while the cadets learn from mentors about community caring, disaster prevention and important disaster mitigation construction practices."

The costs for the Seniors Ready program were minimal because much of the training and materials were donated and the cadets were all volunteers.



Alaska Military Academy Cadets Josh Hasting & Micah Jennings, Senior Citizen homeowners Mr. & Mrs. Tom English and Project Impact Coordinator Kathy Scott

“Just Do It” says Kitsap County

The 1999 Project Impact Community from Washington State has jumped into Project Impact with both feet. Already proactive in mitigation efforts, the County plans to envelope Project Impact into all their Emergency Management programs. “Not only are we integrating Project Impact into the Emergency Management programs, we also plan to use technology and research to help expand it into other County/City programs,” says Phyllis Mann, Kitsap County Emergency Management Director.

The County has several programs with great potential for involving mitigation. This includes their K-PREP (Kitsap Practices Responsible Emergency Preparedness) and “Just Do It” campaign. K-PREP is an all-hazards community preparedness program

while the “Just Do It” campaign is the County’s effort to bolt and brace the community against the effects of ground movement caused by earthquakes. According to Charlotte Garrido, Kitsap County Commissioner, “Kitsap County has already put together a team of community, business, and government leaders which, with Project Impact, can provide greater direction and implementation of disaster preventive measures.”

For more information about Kitsap County’s Project Impact initiative, please contact Phyllis Mann at (360) 337-7119 or pmann@co.kitsap.wa.us.

Additional information can be found at their web page: www.kitsapdem.org.

A Walla Walla Progress Report

Walla Walla’s Project Impact team has had success in implementing mitigating measures for several different hazards. So far, a wildfire demonstration project, two flood mitigation projects and several public information projects are completed.

The Flood Workgroup completed a drainage improvement project that protects several homes, grain elevators and a railroad. Also completed was a joint PI/NRCS bank stabilization project protecting farm structures. The Wildfire Workgroup, with volunteers, created defensible space for a home located in the Urban/Wildland interface. Several public awareness projects were successful. This included development of a web site, <http://home.bmi.net/impact>, a hazard history display and video, and numerous newspaper articles and radio spots.

For more information about Walla Walla’s Project Impact efforts, please call Don Marlatt at 509-527-3285.

Tillamook County—On the Road from Heartache to Hope!

Late Fall flooding tested Tillamook, and in-place mitigation projects proved their effectiveness in ending the cycle of damage/repair/damage. Tillamook County’s elevation and refuge area projects sailed through the floodwaters with flying colors. 70 homes and businesses in the community all escaped problems from flooding. Every one of these structures would have experienced some degree of flood damage had they not been elevated to a safe level above floodwaters. Critter pads also provided safe refuge from the cold, muddy water for milk cows and other animals. Past floods of this magnitude routinely resulted in substantial numbers of dead livestock and other problems associated with missed milkings. Initial reports are that no cows drowned and mastitis-related problems were minimal.

While these mitigation measures are the primary reasons that losses were as small as they were, additional community based efforts have also contributed to minimizing losses. The community has

completed several drainage improvement projects in the past year which already are providing a return on the investment. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers fast-tracked a series of Advance Measures projects in the Tillamook area. One element of their work is 10 tidegates, which have been integrated into a major levee west of town. These tidegates significantly decreased the duration of the flood by keeping the water from being trapped behind the levee thereby minimizing siltation problems as well. “We are very interested in discussing flood response planning and projects with other communities in Oregon, in order to help them reduce their flood related damages until more permanent mitigation measures can be taken,” said Les Miller Chief, Emergency Management Branch in Portland.

Tillamook County can

expect future storms which will result in flooding in the community, but some of the floodprone homes and businesses know they will be spared the cost and aggravation of flood related losses. These successful projects are serving as prudent examples of pre-disaster efforts to others in the community who are still subject to losses in an area at risk to flooding.

Coming Up!

Project Impact Today is going digital! We’ll be transitioning towards an “all electronic” publication by the end of this Year. Be sure that your Region 10 Liaison Officer has your current e-mail address!!!



Communities Convene in Washington, D.C.

KOMO TV 4 Rates High

Fisher Broadcasting's ABC affiliate station KOMO TV, received the Outstanding Media Organization Award for its strong commitment to making the Greater Seattle region more resistant to future natural disasters. As a media partner for *Project Impact* efforts in King and Pierce Counties, KOMO TV aggressively educates its public on the importance of disaster prevention as has been instrumental in recruiting public and private sector partnerships for regional disaster prevention efforts.

KOMO ABC 4 became a Project Impact corporate partner to King and Pierce Counties in early 1999. They have enthusiastically embraced the mission of marketing mitigation in western Washington, reaching out to adults and children, as well as actively soliciting new corporate partners throughout the Puget Sound region. In August, KOMO provided a booth space to King and Pierce Counties' Project Impact "Secure It" earthquake safety campaign for children at the KOMO's Kids Fair at no cost to the communities. October through December KOMO ABC 4 aired a "Secure It" promotion emphasizing the importance of computer tie-downs in schools. KOMO ABC 4 also maintains a hotlink on their website to King and Pierce Counties Project Impact web page. Troy Hill, who accepted the award on behalf



L to R, KOMO TV's Troy Hill and King County Office of Emergency Management manager, Eric Holdeman display a prize of successful partnering.

of KOMO, praised King and Pierce Counties for their vision and says, "We are happy to be the television station carrying the mitigation message in the Puget Sound."

Benton County Receives Outstanding Task Force Award

Benton County's Emergency Management Council was honored at the Project Impact Summit by being named **Outstanding Regional Task Force**. Diane Merten, Council Chair, accepted the award which recognized the group's exceptional contributions to increasing the community's disaster resilience.

Earning this acknowledgment has not been easy. The Council has been in existence for over a decade now. It was initiated after the San Francisco area's Loma Prieta earthquake awakened Mrs. Merten's attention to the fact that her community was not adequately prepared for a major earthquake. Early discussions on this issue led to formation of the Council.

What has helped separate the BCEMC from the other communities who have a group which grapples with their natural hazard problems is the persistent and systematic approach they have taken toward solving local and regional problems. They have addressed numerous situations similar to their existing problem of how to replace 30% of



L to R: Lea Ellen Witt, Jackie Templeton, Andy Hendrickson, James Lee Witt, Diane Merten, Sharon Pleu and Peggy Peirson.

the existing public school facilities. While addressing other seismic concerns, they have found that many of their schools utilize construction standards which at the time were deemed appropriate but have since been determined to be less than optimal for ensuring occupant life-safety.

Another commendable example of BCEMC's success are the relationships between public response/planning/support organizations, private employers/utilities/non-profit organizations and other groups it has fostered. These are not just rainy day partnerships focused at solving disaster problems while disaster strikes. These relationships are used to plan and prepare for, coordinate resources and respond to, recover from and mitigate against natural hazards and other problems facing the community. The council has also been a steward for surrounding counties as well.

Space prohibits recognition of all the BCEMC members/partners who have contributed to this effort. A detailed list of community partners can be viewed at <http://osu.orst.edu/groups/bcemc/>.

For more information on the Benton County Emergency Management Council, please call Peggy Peirson at 541-757-6864.

Tillamook Teens mix Music and Mitigation

Prior to heading to Washington D.C. and the *Project Impact* Summit, twenty-nine Tillamook Junior High School Jazz Band students harvested 4,000 willow cuttings for riparian stream habitat restoration at Mill Creek in Tillamook County, Oregon. The Summit visit helped round off a crash course on the crucial role of

sound mitigation practices in environmental restoration and damage prevention projects, and was paid for by a combination of fundraisers, donations from Kiwanis, and reimbursement from work performed through the Oregon State University (OSU) Natural Resources 4-H Program.



Reducing Disaster Losses

(continued from page 1)

- Hazard Loss Reduction
- Introduction to FEMA Programs

For copies of the "Reducing Disaster Losses" Compact Disk, call Eric Peebles, FEMA, (425) 487-4753, or Pat Massey, FEMA, (425) 487-4626.

Boise River

(continued from page 3)

workgroup has been wrestling with these issues for a number of years, and dynamic modeling will assist them in developing realistic proposals for floodplain management.

The assistantship will consist of a two-year program, with the first phase focussing on the Boise River as it flows through the City of Boise, and the second phase on the downstream portion of the River to its confluence with the Snake River. Project sponsors anticipate also applying dynamic modeling to the foothill streams that pose flash flood hazards to Boise.

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